

## Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-01 PM-03 SAM-01 NSC-07 OPR-01 PA-01

RSC-01 SS-14 SY-02 USIA-04 PRS-01 A-01 USSS-00 AID-05

IO-03 DRC-01 /051 W

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P 071543Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3437

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONROVIA 5776

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, LI, US (TOLBERT, WILLIAM R., JR.)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S VISIT TO US

REF: MONROVIA 5733

1. AT ACTING FONMIN OKAI'S REQUEST, WHICH HAD BEEN PERCOLATING FOR SEVERAL DAYS, CHARGE TODAY CALLED UPON OKAI. LATTER'S OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE FOR MEETING WAS TO EXPRESS GOL'S APPREHENSIONS ABOUT OMISSION OF MENTION OF AFRICAN PEOPLES IN PRESIDENT FORD'S

UNGA SPEECH. OKAI CITED TWO PARAGRAPHS CONCERNING (A) BOLSTERING PARTNERSHIP WITH TRADITIONAL FRIENDS AND ALLIES, AND (B) HELPING DEVELOPING NATIONS REALIZE THEIR ASPIRATIONS TO GROW MORE OF THEIR OWN FOOD. HE MADE GREAT POINT OF STRESSING THAT COUNTRIES LIKE LIBERIA MUST TAKE STATEMENTS OF WORLD FIGURES SUCH AS PRESIDENT FORD AS EVIDENCING CONSIDERED VIEWS, AND IN THIS CASE COULD NOT FAIL TO NOTE OMISSION. OKAI ALSO EMPHASIZED LIBERIA'S PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY TO US STATEMENTS BECAUSE OF "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN US AND LIBERIA. HE ASKED EMBASSY TO "CLARIFY" ABOVE ASPECT OF PRESIDENT FORD'S SPEECH.

2. CHARGE UNDERTOOK TO REPORT GOL CONCERNS, AS RELATED BY OKAI, AND STATED THAT HE COULD ASSURE OKAI THAT THE PRESIDENT'S CONCERN FOR AND INTEREST IN AFRICA IS STRONG, POINTING OUT THAT

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PRESIDENT'S SPEECH HAS INDEED MENTIONED AFRICA SHORTLY AFTER

PARAGRAPHS MENTIONED BY OKAI. CHARGE OBSERVED THAT PERHAPS GOL WAS OPERATING FROM PLANNED TEXT THAT HAD BEEN CHANGED PRIOR TO DELIVERY AND UNDERTOOK TO SUPPLY TEXT OF SPEECH AS DELIVERED SHOWING MENTION OF AFRICA.

3. OKAI SEEMED SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD REFERRED TO AFRICA, AND SAID HE WAS VERY HAPPY ABOUT THAT. HE NEVERTHELESS THEN READ IN ITS ENTIRETY PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT TOLBERT, IN WHICH FORMER ADVERTS TO HISTORIC AND SPECIAL TIES BETWEEN LIBERIA AND US AND EXPRESSES HOPE THAT SCHEDULES OF TWO PRESIDENTS WILL PERMIT THEIR MEETING DURING TOLBERT'S COMING PRIVATE VISIT TO US. AT THIS POINT OKAI HOPED THAT "YOU WILL GIVE US SOME EXPRESSION THAT WILL SHOW THAT THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR US TO BE DISTURBED" (ABOUT PRESIDENT'S FAILURE TO MENTION AFRICA).

4. COMMENT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ACTING FONMIN CALLED CHARGE IN JUST TO EXPRESS APPREHENSIONS ABOUT IMPLICATION OF PRESIDENT'S SUPPOSED FAILURE TO MENTION AFRICA IN HIS SPEECH TO UNGA. TODAY'S MEETING APPEARED TO BE AN ELABORATE AND SUBTLE PLOY TO ENGAGE EMBASSY (AND DEPARTMENT) SUPPORT FOR A TOLBERT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD, REQUEST FOR WHICH WE EXPECT SHORTLY TO BE MADE (MONROVIA 5733).

5. OKAI STILL HAS NO FIRM DATES FOR TOLBERT'S TRIP, BUT THOUGHT LATTER WOULD LEAVE BETWEEN OCTOBER 20 AND 25.

6. IF TOLBERT DOES REQUEST APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT, WE WOULD HOPE THAT TIME CAN BE FOUND FOR IT ON LATTER'S SCHEDULE. THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT GOL REGARDS PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER AS VIRTUALLY EXTENDING INVITATION. MOREOVER, TOLBERT IS DETERMINED SOON TO ASSUME LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN OAU AND NON-ALIGNED GROUP CONTEXTS; IF HE IS SUCCESSFUL IN THESE ASPIRATIONS, AND WE JUDGE, PARTICULARLY AS TO FORMER, THAT HE MAY WELL BE, IT WOULD BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE IF WE HAVE HELPED TO INSURE THAT HE IS FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS US. WE ARE NOT UNMINDFUL THAT LIBERIAN PRESIDENTS HAVE TRADITIONALLY TREASURED THEIR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH US PRESIDENTS, AND THAT TOLBERT DID NOT, AS HE HAD HOPED, GET TO SEE PRESIDENT NIXON DURING LAST SPECIAL SESSION OF UNGA.

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## Message Attributes

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